

Program 061

SPI - Learning Assistance Program**Recommendation Summary**

Dollars in Thousands

	Annual FTEs	General Fund State	Other Funds	Total Funds
2003-05 Expenditure Authority		130,023	301,322	431,345
Total Maintenance Level		134,530	343,227	477,757
Difference		4,507	41,905	46,412
Percent Change from Current Biennium		3.5%	13.9%	10.8%
Performance Changes				
Pension Gain Sharing #		(1,623)		(1,623)
Projected Unit Credit - OSA #		(4,505)		(4,505)
Expand Learning Assistance Program#		41,517		41,517
Subtotal		35,389		35,389
Total Proposed Budget		169,919	343,227	513,146
Difference		39,896	41,905	81,801
Percent Change from Current Biennium		30.7%	13.9%	19.0%
Total Proposed Budget by Activity				
Learning Assistance		169,919	343,227	513,146
Total Proposed Budget		169,919	343,227	513,146

PERFORMANCE LEVEL CHANGE DESCRIPTIONS**Pension Gain Sharing #**

Prefunding for Pension Gain Sharing is removed from the budget.

Projected Unit Credit - OSA #

This item reflects moving the Public Employees' Retirement System, the Teachers' Retirement System, and the School Employees' Retirement System from the aggregate actuarial method to the projected unit credit method, using assumptions and methods provided by the Office of the State Actuary.

Expand Learning Assistance Program#

In 2008, students must demonstrate that they have met state standards in reading, math, and writing through passage of these sections of the 10th grade Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). Students who do not meet the state standards on their first attempt will have the opportunity to retake the WASL or, after two retakes, demonstrate mastery through an approved alternative assessment or appeals system. Students who do not meet state standards on the WASL in 10th grade will need additional learning time or focused instructional efforts to assist them in meeting the standards on subsequent retakes.

Nationally and in Washington State, student assessments show an inverse relationship between student achievement and the percentage of students from low-income families in schools. In general, students from low-income families face more obstacles to student learning due to many cumulative factors, which may include differences in school readiness at kindergarten, frequent school moves which interrupt student learning, and differences in health care including vision screenings. In schools with high percentages of students from low-income families, there are great demands to meet the needs of students transitioning in and out of classrooms, providing instruction at many skill levels, as well as maintaining the flow and sequence of instruction for other students.

The Learning Assistance Program (LAP) funding formula is changed to recognize the learning and instructional challenges in different districts by using poverty as a proxy measure. Districts will receive funding based on the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch. Districts with more than 40 percent of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch will receive additional funding to recognize the greater challenges in areas with a higher concentration of families living in poverty.

The overall funding for the LAP program is increased to provide school districts with additional resources to serve high school students who have not met state standards on the 10th grade WASL. Funding is also provided so that districts that are projected to receive less funding under the new formula would still be allocated at least the same amount of LAP funding the district received in the 2004-05 school year.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

Learning Assistance

The state Learning Assistance Program and federal Title I funding provide instructional help to children whose academic performance is below average. Students receive assistance through one-on-one or small-group instruction, in addition to regular classes. State Learning Assistance funds for 2004-05 school year are allocated to districts based on a formula which includes district enrollment and factors to approximate student learning needs in the district. Federal Title I funding from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is the largest federal program supporting K-12 educational services. Title I funds are provided based on a complicated funding formula, which targets funding to schools and districts with higher percentages of students in poverty. (General Fund-State, General Fund-Federal)